

Signs of Trauma

Young Adults (Age 18 - 22)



Trauma can have significant impact on a young adult's life, but sometimes it can be hard to spot the signs.

Trauma may affect a young adult's ...

In the following ways...



Body

- Eating problems
- Nightmares
- Insomnia
- Intense fatigue or exhaustion
- Dissociation (i.e., "spacing out")
- Drastic and/or sudden changes to appearance (e.g., hair color, haircut, piercing, tattoos, clothing attire)



Brain (thinking)

- Decreased feelings of safety
- Negative thoughts of self (e.g., views self as permanently damaged)
- Loss of former belief systems
- Sudden changes in performance, attention, or memory issues



Emotions (feelings)

- Intense feelings of shame
- Guilt
- Fear
- Anger or irritability
- Hopelessness
- Pain
- Flashbacks
- Panic attacks
- Edginess
- Emotional numbness



Behaviors

- Drug and alcohol use
- Difficulty making decisions and judgments
- Difficulty staying on task
- Overcommit or take on more responsibility than they can handle
- Withdrawal from others
- Difficulty finishing tasks or accomplishing
- Suicidal thoughts and actions
- Self-injury (e.g., cutting, hair pulling, burning)
- Loss of interest in activities
- Frequent calling off from work



Relationships & attachments

- Difficulty with authority at work, school, or in the community
- Isolation
- Few close or long-term relationships
- Difficulty relying on others
- Challenges with trust and intimacy
- Unhealthy romantic and sexual relationships

Note: While this guide is meant to help you think about potential signs of trauma, it is not meant to be a diagnostic tool or checklist. Remember, these lists are not exhaustive. Individual children may exhibit a combination of signs from different age groups and signs of trauma may vary based on the developmental stage and cultural background of the child.